

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion and in view of the present amendment, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-11 are pending in the present application. Claims 2-4, 6 and 7 were indicated as allowable or as containing allowable subject matter, and claims 1, 4-6, 8, 10 and 11 are amended by the present amendment.

As an initial matter, Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. Indicated allowable independent claim 6 is amended to clarify the features thereof and to better conform to standard claim drafting practice.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph for lack of enablement. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Support for the features of claims 8-10 is found in the originally filed specification at least at page 15, lines 4-15 which recites, for example, "the ball guide groove can be formed on the rotary dial while the protrusions and the depressions can be formed on the stationary member." Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection be withdrawn

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 5 and 8-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,346,269 to SLAVIN et al. (herein "SLAVIN"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 is amended to recite "a circular rotary dial," support for which is found in the originally filed specification at least in Fig.3, reference numeral 20. Independent claim 1 is also amended to recite "the circular rotary dial is supported by the stationary member such that the ball, the ball guide groove and the cylindrical resilient member are covered by the circular rotary dial and the stationary member," support for which is found in the originally filed specification at least in Figs. 1 and 9 and at page 10, line 24 to page 11, line 22. Independent claims 8, 10 and 11 are amended to recite similar features.

In a non-limiting example, the rotary dial device can, as a result of the above features, be manufactured with a simple structure (see the specification at page 11, line 23 to page 12, line 1).

By contrast, in SLAVIN, the "shaft 23" is too narrow to cover "the ball, the ball guide groove and the cylindrical resilient member," as recited in pending independent claims 1, 8, 10 and 11. Rather, Fig. 2 of SLAVIN shows that "slots 34" and a hemispherical "spring 36" surround the "shaft 23," rather than a circular rotary dial which covers "the ball, the ball guide groove and the cylindrical resilient member" as recited in independent claims 1, 6, 8, 10 and 11.

Moreover, assuming *arguendo* that the "detent disk 30" of SLAVIN having a toothed structure corresponds to the "at least one protrusion and at least one depression" recited in independent claim 1, for example, the "detent disk 30" shown in Figs. 2 and 12 of SLAVIN is different from the "at least one protrusion and at least one depression on said circular rotary dial" recited in amended independent claim 1, because the "detent disk 30" of

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SLAVIN is surrounded by the "wall 33" which has "a pair of opposed slots 34" (which opposed slots 34 are suggested by the outstanding Office Action to correspond to the "ball guide groove" recited in pending independent claim 1). More particularly, because the "slots 34" are entirely external to the "detent disk 30" of SLAVIN, it is respectfully submitted SLAVIN does not teach or suggest "at least one protrusion and at least one depression which are formed along one of two imaginary cylindrical surfaces with axes thereof on an axis of said circular rotary dial, said two imaginary cylindrical surfaces being positioned radially outside and inside said ball groove guide in said radial direction of said circular rotary dial, respectively," as recited in pending independent claim 1.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent claims 1, 8, 10 and 11 and each of the claims depending therefrom patentably distinguish over SLAVIN.

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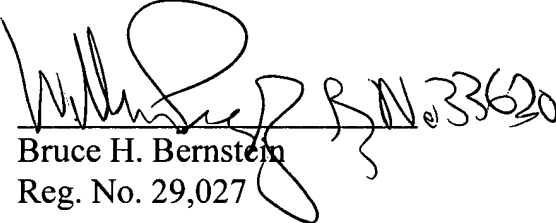
III. Conclusion

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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